

# Topics

(April-June 1994)

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|-----------------|--|-----------------|---|----------------|--|
| <b>4 April</b>  | • Airline service opened for two weekly flights (Mondays and Thursdays) between Hakodate and Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk with Antonov AN24s  | <b>25 April</b> | • After Prime Minister Hosokawa's resignation (8 April), plenary sessions of Lower and Upper Houses elected Tsutomu Hata, president of Shinseito, 51st Japanese prime minister. New cabinet formed 28 April   |                |  |
| <b>7 April</b>  | • JR Freight announced cargo transport volume declined 4.5% (2,521,000 tonnes) from previous FY to 53,913,000 tonnes in FY1993, recording declines for 2 consecutive years. Company attributed to long recession, earthquakes, torrential rains and other natural disasters, and also to poor rice crop. Performance lowest since company start in FY1987, dipping below 56,280,000 tonnes marked in same year | <b>26 April</b> | • China Airlines Airbus A-600R (Flight No. 140), bound for Nagoya from Taipei, crashed and burned on landing killing 264 of 271 crew and passengers.  | <b>30 May</b>  | • Construction work started on nine-story head office building for JR Hokkaido (with total floor area of about 17,000 square meters) on about 10,000 square meters of land in front of Soen Station, Sapporo. Completion scheduled for November 1995 at total construction cost of about ¥5 billion  |
| <b>21 April</b> | • DC electrification on section between Hachioji and Komagawa (31.1 km) covering southern half of Hakko Line started to increase transportation capacity and speed train services through direct train operation to central Tokyo. Total construction cost ¥43 billion. Construction work scheduled for completion by end FY1995   | <b>6 May</b>    | • Channel Tunnel, connecting UK and France, with total length of 50 km (including 38-km undersea section) opened by H. M. Queen Elizabeth II and President Mitterrand of France attending opening ceremony. Eurostar express trains linking London with Paris and Brussels in 3 hours to debut late summer  | <b>6 June</b>  | • Russian-made Tupolev 154 of China's Northwest Airline, bound for Guangzhou from Xian, crashed shortly after takeoff killing all 146 passengers and 14 crew   |
| <b>22 April</b> | • "Shima Spanish Village", integrated resort facility constructed by Kintetsu group in Isobe-machi, Mie Prefecture, opened. Consists of four areas: "Parque Espana", theme park with Spanish-style streets and cultural facilities, hotel (252 rooms) and gardens, villas and green zones. About 3 million people expected to visit resort village annually  | <b>15 May</b>   | • So-called "Kamisunagawa Line", 7.3-km section between Sunagawa on Hakodate trunkline and Kamisunagawa, abolished ending 76-year history matching rise and fall of coal industry   | <b>10 June</b> | • Tomei Highway Bus, joint venture of JR Bus Kanto, JR Tokai Bus and JR West Bus of JR group, celebrated 25th anniversary. Total ridership reached 50 million since Tokyo-Nagoya Expressway opened in 1969, with annual ridership averaging 2 million  |
|                 |  | <b>15 May</b>   | • Train derailed and overturned at Pinlaung, Kayah State, Myanmar, on new line completed in 1993. 25 passengers killed and 38 injured   | <b>15 June</b> | • Train services started on Kansai Airport Line of JR West and Nankai Electric Railway's Airport Line to offer railway access to Kansai International Airport and tentatively serving airport employees until formal opening of airport on 4 September. Lines connect Kyoto, Osaka and Tennoji to airport through existing and new lines, and also through jointly-operated sections |
|                 |  | <b>15 May</b>   | • Fifteen-car Amtrak train (with about 440 crew and passengers aboard), bound for Miami from New York, derailed and partially overturned at Smithfield, North Carolina, killing one person and injuring about 180   | <b>17 June</b> | • Fifteenth World Cup Soccer Games opened in USA to continue until 17 July   |
|                 |  | <b>18 May</b>   | • JR East twin building completed at Tabata, Tokyo, consisting of 10-story office building (with two basement floors and total floor area of about 31,500 square meters) and four-story command post building (with two basement floors and total floor area of about 15,000 square meters). Under construction since April 1992 at cost of about ¥35 billion | <b>18 June</b> | • Fokker 27 of Indonesia's Merpati Nusantara Airways crashed on Palu mountains in Sulawesi Island, killing all 12 crew and passengers  |
|                 |  | <b>20 May</b>   | • Commuter trains collided head-on in Tjirebon City, Djawa Barat, Indonesia killing at least nine people and injuring 55  | <b>18 June</b> | • Small chartered plane, bound for USA from Mexico with passengers to see World Cup crashed near Dulles Interna-   |
|                 |  | <b>25 May</b>   | • Six JRs excluding JR East   |                |  |



■ Tomei Highway Bus bound for Nagoya passing Mt Fuji

(JR Bus Kanto)

**20 June** • "Haihua", 13,481-tonne dead-weight cargo ship operated by joint venture between Japan and China, starts on Shanghai-Nagasaki route as first cargo ship to connect two cities in 52 years

**21 June** • According to "Natural Disaster White Paper" released by National Land Agency, 435 Japanese killed or reported missing in natural disasters in 1993, second largest number after 522 in 1982. White Paper attributes large number to many natural disasters in year, including earthquake off southwestern coast of Hokkaido and torrential rains in Kagoshima Prefecture. In view of increasing foreign residents in Japan, called for new measures including provision of natural disaster information in foreign languages

**28 June** • "Desirable Railway Technology toward 21st Century" released by Council for Transport Technology, advisory organ to Transport Minister. Council formulated "Success 21 Plan" classifying 20 important technical items into four categories: speed increases, ride comfort, improved safety, and efficiency. Plan included to develop large double-decker carriage to run at 250 km/hour to ease commuter congestion. Ministry of Transport hopes to achieve plan in about 10 years

**28 June** • According to "White Paper on Traffic Safety" released by Management and Coordination Agency, 724,675 traffic accidents occurred in FY1993, up 29,330 over previous fiscal year, killing 10,942, down 4.4%. Number of victims smallest since 1989, but still above 10,000 level

**29 June** • As result of en bloc resignation of Hata cabinet (25 June), plenary sessions of Upper and Lower houses elected Tomiichi Murayama as 52nd Japanese prime minister. New cabinet (coalition of three parties of Liberal-Democratic Party, Social Democratic Party of Japan, and New Party Sakigake,) inaugurated 30 June. Former Prime Minister Hata's 59 days in office second shortest in postwar Japan following 52 days of ex-Prime Minister Higashikuni

## Milestones

(April-June 1994)

**Isamu Yamashita**, 83, ex-board chairman of JR East, ex-president, ex-board chairman of Mitsui Engineering and Shipbuilding, died 6 May. (See obituary in Japan Railway & Transport Review No.2, June 1994.)

**Toshio Taguchi**, 62, board chairman of Seino Transportation, became president of All-Japan Trucking Association. Born in Nagano Prefecture, Taguchi graduated from Keio University in 1955

and joined Seino Transportation. After assuming posts of director, managing director and executive director, became president in 1981 and board chairman in 1987

**Masashi Hashimoto**, 64, board chairman of JR Freight, assumed post of board chairman of Japan Federation of Goods Distribution Associations 17 June. Born in Tokyo, Hashimoto graduated from Tokyo University, Faculty of Economics, and entered JNR. After assuming posts of director and managing director of JNR Freight Bureau, became managing director of Tobu Railway in 1984. Returned to JNR next year as vice-president. After division and privatisation of JNR, became president of JR Freight and became board chairman in 1993. Had been serving as vice-president of federation inaugurated in 1991

**Takashige Uchida**, 74, vice-president of Tobu Railway, promoted to president on 29 June. Kaichiro Nezu, who became president at only 27 and was known as owner-manager, became board chairman after passing 80 years of age. Born in Tokyo, Uchida graduated from Tokyo University, Department of Engineering, and entered Ministry of Railways. After assuming posts of managing director of JNR, managing director and executive director of Tobu Railway, became president of Japan Railway Construction Public Corp. in 1983. Became vice-president of Tobu Railways in June 1988

**Wa Tashiro**, 67, vice president of Kinki Nippon Railway, promoted to president on 29 June. Born in Oita Prefecture, Tashiro graduated from Tokyo University, Second Engineering Department, in 1949 and joined Kinki Nippon Railway. Became director in 1978, and after assuming posts of managing director and executive director, became vice-president in June 1989. Moichiro Kanamori, president, became board chairman

**Soichi Minouchi**, 67, vice-president of Nagoya Railroad, promoted to president on 29 June. Born in Tokyo, Minouchi graduated from Tokyo University in 1952 and joined the Bank of Japan. After assuming posts of chief of Nagoya Branch and director of BOJ, became vice-president of Nagoya Railroad in June 1988. Seiichiro Taniguchi, president, became board chairman, and Kenichi Kajii adviser

**Nobuaki Futami**, 59, Lower House member from Komei Party appointed Transport Minister of Hata Cabinet on 28 April. Born in Tokyo, completed post-graduate work at Waseda University in March 1960 and began working for Komei Shimbun in 1965. First elected to Lower House from 3rd electoral district of Ibaraki Prefecture in December 1969. Elected to Lower House 7 times.

**Shizuka Kamei**, 57, Lower House member from Liberal Democratic Party, appointed Transport Minister of Murayama Cabinet on 30 June. Born in Hiroshima Prefecture, Kamei graduated from Tokyo University in 1960 and began working for the Police Agency in 1962. First elected to Lower House from 3rd electoral district of Hiroshima Prefecture in October 1979. Elected to Lower House 6 times. ■